

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A descent apparatus for loads and/or persons, said apparatus including a cable or rope having one end adapted to be fixed at an elevated location with the remainder of the cable or rope being wound around an inner pulley rotatably mounted within an outer housing via an axle shaft, wherein the outer housing is adapted to be attached directly to the load and/or person, and wherein the relative rotation between the inner pulley and the axle shaft is controlled by a closed circuit gear pump the gears of which form transmission means between the inner pulley and the axle shaft, said closed circuit gear pump forming part of a hydraulic circuit containing a constriction to control the speed of the pump and thus the speed of rotation of the inner pulley about the axle shaft and as a consequence the speed of descent of the descent apparatus as the cable or rope unwinds from the inner pulley.
2. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the size of the constriction is fixed so as to provide a single predetermined speed of descent.
3. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the size of the constriction may be variable to provide for different speeds of descent.
4. (Currently Amended) A descent apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the inner pulley includes as a cup-shaped member having an open end closed by a closure member both of which members carry radially outwardly extending flanges between which a space is defined to retain the cable or rope around the pulley.
5. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the cup-shaped member and the closure member define an inner cavity which contains said closed circuit gear pump.

6. (Currently amended) A descent apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the closed circuit gear pump includes a central sun gear and a plurality of diametrically opposed planet gears.

7. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the sun and planet gears are rotably sandwiched between members which include a series of orifices and cavities and interconnecting channels through which hydraulic fluid for the hydraulic circuit is pumped through the closed circuit gear pump.

8. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the constriction is provided in one of the orifices, cavities or channels.

9. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the constriction is provided by one of the orifices through one of the members which sandwich the sun and the planet gears.

10. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the constriction is provided by a valve member co-operating with a mating seat in the end of said orifice.

11. (Original) A descent apparatus as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the position of the valve member relative to its seat is adjustable to thereby control the rate of flow of hydraulic fluid through said closed circuit fluid pump and the speed of descent of the descent apparatus.

12. (Cancelled)
